

LETTERS

ADDRESSED TO

WILLIAM WILBERFORCE, M. P.

RECOMMENDING

THE ENCOURAGEMENT

OF THE

CULTIVATION OF SUGAR

IN

OUR DOMINIONS IN THE EAST INDIES,

AS THE

NATURAL AND CERTAIN MEANS OF EFFECTING

THE GENERAL AND TOTAL

ABOLITION OF THE SLAVE-TRADE.

—
By JAMES CROPPER.

“ It is obvious, therefore, from the few facts which we have mentioned, (and they are but a very few in comparison with those we could produce,) that the measures hitherto pursued for the abolition of the slave-trade have totally failed; that all the treaties made with foreign powers have either been directly violated, or evaded; and that if the numerical amount of human misery has been somewhat diminished, which, however, is doubtful, the aggravation of heinous guilt, and of human suffering, has been increased in a tenfold degree since the trade was abolished by England, and more especially since the conclusion of the treaties with the several powers of Europe. Every species of crime may now be comprehended under the name of slave-trade—murder—robbery—pillage—desolation, and all the evils and distress which moral turpitude and depravity, excited by the basest avarice, are capable of producing.”
—*Quarterly Review*, No. 51.

LIVERPOOL,

Printed by James Smith;

PUBLISHED BY LONGMAN, HURST, AND CO. LONDON.

1822.

PREFACE.

IN bringing these Letters again before the public, I could have wished that the substance might have been condensed into a smaller compass; but as many who might have read some of the Letters, would prefer seeing the *new matter* by itself, to going twice over the same subject, the present mode has been adopted, in which the whole of the subject is arranged as it was from time to time written.

It may be proper to state, that on the opening of the East India trade, a difference of 10s per cwt. in the duty was fixed on all sugars coming from India; the qualities of these sugars being of course known and taken into view. An application was at first made by the West India planters, for an increase in the duty on all sugars imported from India, though this was afterwards modified

so as to apply to clayed sugar only. From the first mention of the subject, I rejoiced that the proposition would be taken into consideration, not doubting, that if the original regulation were to be disturbed, both sides would previously be fully heard. Such a discussion, brought on by the West India planters themselves, came with advantage before the public; and gave good reason to hope, that the question would in the end be disposed of according to the best interests of the country, which, I conceive, can never be at variance with justice and humanity.

However much I may condemn the system of slave cultivation, or those prohibitory duties which prevent free labour coming into fair competition with it, yet it must be admitted, that the country has its full share in the blame; and when the subject shall be taken up as it deserves, I have no doubt that such plans may be adopted as will embrace the just claims of all parties, lead gradually to the introduction of a better system in the West Indies, and leave uncramped the trade and energies of the country.

I have stated, that to so small an extent, and of such a nature, is slavery in Bengal, that many who

have resided years in that country, are not aware of its existence; and I have just received a very strong confirmation of this from a gentleman of great respectability, who resided in the Benares (the sugar) district for more than twenty years; he was largely engaged in every article of commerce, and says, “ I employed 2500 to 3000 people per day, in the regular season, *but I never heard of a slave*. The people came regularly to their work, either by daily labour, by piece-work, or contract.”

In these Letters, I trust I have succeeded in proving:—

That slave cultivation, being much dearer than 6.
that by free men, can only be supported by high 37 to 41.
prices of produce. 48 to 50.

That this is proved by the extraordinary fact,
(though contrary to the wise system generally 20, 21,
pursued by the country, of encouraging im-
provements, by which produce and manufactures
are brought cheaper to market,) that we are paying
£1,200,000 as a premium on slave cultivation; 37.
and the application for further protection proves,
that so enormous a sum is inadequate to support 40.
this falling system.

3. That it is also further proved by the fact, that the cultivation of indigo, in the East Indies, has nearly put an end to its cultivation where slavery exists ; and that the price of cotton has already greatly fallen since there has been a free competition.

54. That the most certain means to destroy the foreign slave-trade will be found to be the encouragement of the cheaper productions of free labour in our own dominions, and that whilst we continue to load these with almost prohibitory duties, other nations may consider us insincere, or that we have some sinister motives in our endeavours to procure the general abolition of the slave-trade.

50. That, had the prices of West India produce, for the last 120 years, been so low as not to pay for the purchase, more attention would doubtless
68. have been given to the natural increase of slaves ; and that the population of those islands might have been double what it now is, without the importation of one single slave during the whole of that period.

57. That the proposed measures, so injurious in their general consequences, are not likely to be productive of any benefit to those West India planters who stand most in need of assistance.

That the most serious investigation of this subject is imperiously called for, by the general interests of the people, and more particularly 74 to 80. those of the manufacturers of England ; by the interests of our whole Indian empire, and of every one depending on remittances from that country ; and above all, by the general interests of a very large portion of the human race.

I am fully aware that the supposed connexion of my own private interests, in this case, with the interests of my country and of humanity, render my motives liable to suspicion ; but I trust, that those who have desired to regulate their commercial transactions by a belief that “ The Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men,” and hath decreed in the nature of things, that “ Who contradicts His will must disappoint his own,” will not be discouraged from defending their own rights, or asserting their accordance with the welfare of their country and of the world at large.

Liverpool, 5th Month 3, 1821.

WILLIAM WILBERFORCE,

Respected Friend,

1. I know that any thing which respects the great cause which is the subject of my letter, will be a sufficient apology for my addressing thee.

2. In the first place I should state, that I am engaged in the East India trade, and therefore interested in the measure likely soon to be brought before Parliament, of an increase in the duty on East India sugar, against which the merchants interested in that trade here, have petitioned Parliament; but they did not introduce into their petition any thing respecting its influence on the slave-trade.

3. On the opening of the East India trade, I believed that a great experiment was to be tried,—that of a free competition between the products of

the East by *free men*, and those of the West by *slaves*. Of the result of that competition, even shackled as it was in the case of sugar, by a difference of 10s per cwt. in the duty, I entertained no doubt; being persuaded, that cultivation by free men, in the country of their birth, must be much cheaper than by the transportation of slaves from Africa to the West Indies. The high freights, and other impediments which the charter of the East India Company caused, prevented the competition of bulky articles; but we had seen the effects in the case of indigo; the introduction of its cultivation in Bengal is but recent, and yet it has now ceased to be raised in any other place to any considerable extent, owing no doubt to the cheapness of its production there. With these views, I did not hesitate to enter extensively into the East India trade; and though now so much overdone, as not to be profitable, yet in these respects I have not been disappointed. The importations of cotton have greatly reduced the prices of that article, and thereby tended to extend its consumption, so that since the opening of this trade, the cotton-manufactures of Great Britain have increased nearly 50 per cent.

4. Besides this great benefit, there is one which the friends of humanity will consider still more important; and that is, that the price of cotton (if not already) is likely, at no great distance of time, to be so reduced, as not to pay for the

further importation of slaves. A friend of mine, who has lately been in America, states, that the planters said that the fall in price was not entirely a loss to them, for they had less inducement to work their negroes hard, and they would increase faster. It hence appears, that a low price may pay under good treatment of the slaves, though it might not pay for that abuse of them which requires a continual fresh supply. The slaves in America are rapidly increasing, and the reduced price of cotton will accelerate that increase; so that with the aid of supplies from India, when they shall again have a good crop, (they have had two bad ones in succession,) it may reasonably be hoped it will very soon, if it has not already, put an end for ever to the importation of slaves for the cultivation of this article.

5. East India sugars have been increasingly coming into consumption in this country; and though the whole extent is yet a mere trifle, yet, seeing what has happened in the cases of indigo and cotton, it is no wonder that West India merchants and planters are alarmed, and call out for increasing protection; for I am persuaded, that if a fair competition were allowed, by some reduction, if not an entire equality in duty, that their present system, so far as it may prevent the natural increase of the slaves, must be altered; nothing but high prices can ever support the slave-trade,—nothing but high prices, which cause

the over-working of the slaves, can ever render it necessary. The slaves in America are said now to be increasing at the rate of 4 per cent per annum; but I think there is no increase in our importations from our West India Colonies, to indicate any such increase there; a fall in the prices of sugars might probably have that effect in the West Indies.

6. It may fairly be asked, why do the West India planters ask for an increased duty on East India sugars? They, no doubt, wish either to increase the price of sugars, or to prevent a fall; and how does it happen, that with all the immense difference of distance which they have to be brought, with a difference of 10s per cwt. in their favour, that they are still afraid of the competition of East India sugars? Is not this a most decided admission that their system of cultivation cannot exist, unless the country is taxed to support it? There is evidently a rate of prices necessary to support slave cultivation, under a treatment which prevents their increase, and may require supply by fresh importations. At a lower rate, slave cultivation may be continued, but not the importation of slaves; cotton seems to be approaching this rate. But in America, where the cultivation of sugar is commenced, it is said (without any difference of opinion) to pay incomparably better than cotton; hence I infer, that sugar is not yet approaching to this point. There

is, I believe, a point still lower, where every system of slavery must be given up. Has not that point arrived in all our cultivation and manufacture in this country? Who would here accept of thousands of men, if they were offered for nothing? It has been computed, that a family which could comfortably be supported under their own management at 18s per week, would cost, if supported in our parish workhouse, 28s per week. In such a state of things, how could slavery exist in this country, even if allowed by law? Is it not hence fair to conclude, that so long as man bears *any price at all*, production has not reached its lowest point; and so long as he bears a high price, there is at least great temptation for breaking the laws against importation.

7. I am persuaded, that if it had not been for the charter of the East India Company shutting out our intercourse with that country, the African slave-trade would long since have ceased to exist, if it had ever had a beginning; and if left to a fair competition, it cannot now much longer continue.

8. It is surely a benefit to this country to be supplied with sugar at a low price; and what do the West India planters offer to the people of England, as an inducement to give up this advantage? Is it that a system of working the negroes may continue, which shall retard their natural increase, and prevent that gradual fall in their price which would remove all temptation to im-

port them? Surely the people of England ought not to be taxed, by keeping up the price of an article which may tend to support this infamous traffic.

9. The slave-trade on the coast of Africa has lately been carried on to a shocking extent; and vain and fruitless it would seem have been all our efforts to abolish this trade, (at least as respects the extent of it, though it may be carried on by others,) if the people of England are to be taxed with a high price of sugar, which can have no other tendency than to support it. We have only to clear the way, instead of opposing fresh obstacles, and we may then hope for a reduction in the prices of sugar, as has already been the case with cotton, and with similar effects.

10. When enlightened views have almost universally condemned systems of restriction or prohibition in commerce, shall we in any case be justified in increasing them? and least of all when such a tax on this country may tend to support a most infamous traffic.

11. The West India planters, no doubt, intend their proposed measure as a prohibition; and if so, they call on the government to sacrifice nearly £50,000 per annum, arising from the difference already existing between the duties paid on East and West India sugar.

12. If these views are correct, and I hope they will at least be thought to deserve investigation,

the Legislature should pause, and consider well, before it adopts the plan proposed. Every benevolent mind must rejoice at the prospect before us, and must be more disposed to hasten than to hinder that course of events which seems to be bringing about these changes, on a basis more solid than any laws or prohibitions whatever.

I am, very respectfully,

Thy friend,

J. C.



Liverpool, 6th Month 19, 1821.

WILLIAM WILBERFORCE,

Respected Friend,

13. In the letter which I addressed to thee on the subject of the proposed additional duty on East India Sugar, I endeavoured to show, that commodities must be produced "much cheaper by free men in the country of their birth, than by slaves transported from Africa to the West Indies;" I also endeavoured to show, that a reduced price of cotton, sugar, &c. had the effect of increasing the population of slaves, without fresh importation; because a low price may pay, under good treatment, where less is produced,

though it might not pay for that abuse of them which requires a continual fresh supply. From these premises, I concluded, that so long as man bears any price at all, production has not reached that low point to which it will inevitably be driven, both by policy and humanity, if not prevented by a tax on the labour of free men, or on the produce of it; and whether slaves are or are not imported illicitly into the British Colonies, the opening of the most extensive and highest market in the world, to sugars cultivated by free men, must tend to extend and encourage that cultivation, and bring the subject of free and slave cultivation the sooner to a fair trial.

14. In order to promote discussion on the subject, and with a view to show the impolicy and inhumanity of the projected duty, I shall again trespass on thy attention.

15. When any body of men ask for relief from a particular pressure, I consider it their duty to look at the effects of the remedies they propose, on other bodies, and on the nation at large; a proposition for the repeal of a tax affecting all, is at once understood; but when one class of traders pray for a tax on another, it will generally be found, on investigation, that the claim hinges on a privilege or a monopoly invaded by the superior industry and economy of their rivals. This, it appears to me, is the case in the present instance; and, therefore, any relief which is

granted to the West India planter, by fixing an additional duty of 5s per cwt. on East India sugar, will be a direct tax on the people of this country, to the same extent. This duty on 150,000 tons, the annual consumption, amounts to £750,000. Now, whether the effect of this tax be to raise the price, or to prevent a fall, just so much as the people lose, the West India planter would gain. The proposition, therefore, only goes to the removal of a burden from one class of men to another, at the expense of the national welfare.

16. I do not understand the distinction between the British Colonies in the West, and the British Possessions in the East, except that those of the East have a greater latitude of trading with other countries. This privilege, however, is not given without affixing some increase of duty. But if the West India planter finds the restrictions under which he labours to be injurious, would it not be more natural, and more consistent with his own interest and that of the country at large, to apply for the removal of these restrictions, rather than to ask for an increased duty on the produce of the East? If the West India planter were permitted to sell his produce in the highest, and buy commodities in the lowest market, I have no doubt that he would find England afforded him advantages which the rest of the world could not. To compel the colonist to import American

flour through England, does not afford this country any market for its produce; and of the exports to the Colonies, of about six millions sterling, there is probably only a very small portion which could be had cheaper any where else.

17. As to the arrangement at the time of opening the East India trade, of a difference of duty, I think it must be understood to mean, what it really was, a difference of 10s per cwt. If prohibition had been meant, it was just as easy to have made it so; but the East India trade are under obligation to the West, for bringing this arrangement under review,—the impolicy of it, as it regards the national welfare, must soon become manifest. If the East India sugars were admitted on an equality of duty, or on the same terms as before the opening of the trade, it is very probable, that in a *very few years*, a population in the East would be turned to the growth of sugars, equal in number to the slave population of all our West India colonies; in that case, and indeed long before the cultivation became so extensive, there would be a reduction in the prices of sugar, equal at least to the reduction on the duty on East India sugars; if that was 10s per cwt. it would make annually £1,500,000 sterling; or if the proposed additional duty of 5s per cwt. had added so much to the price, it would make a difference altogether of £2,250,000 per annum, to the consumers of Great Britain.

18. Though the East Indies might make, I think, as strong a claim to the supply of the country, at a difference of 3s per cwt., even as the old Colonies do to the exclusive supply of these markets; and certainly a much stronger than the newly conquered ones of Demerara, &c.; and this claim is not lessened by its exact accordance with the interests of the country, in which respect I shall now consider this question.

19. Whilst, on the one hand, it would neither be politic nor just, suddenly and without due investigation, to make great alterations in the policy of the country, or in its encouragement given to particular branches of commerce, even though they might not now be thought to be judicious; yet, on the other hand, we should be as cautious, not too rigidly to adhere to old customs and notions, and by doing so, shut out all improvements.

20. The opening of the East India trade, I should consider somewhat like the discovery of a great improvement in machinery; in which case it would not be thought right to lay a duty on the produce of the new invention, so as to deprive the country of the benefit of it, for the sole purpose of keeping up the value of the old and exploded machinery.

21. Before such a benefit as that of having sugar at a greatly reduced price, should be thrown away, a very strong case should be made out.

Even if the West India planters are now producing at as low a price as their mode of culture will admit of, is it right for the country to be entirely shut out from the great benefits of the system of free cultivation? and if, on a full investigation, there is any plan which would enable them to produce sugars cheaper, that plan ought first to be adopted.

22. One of the items of expense attached to West India cultivation, will be found to be the interest of a capital which Colquhoun estimates at about thirty-five millions, invested in 634,000 of our fellow-men. Whether such an item could with any propriety be entertained in a country, where, if man breathes, he is free, I will not now stop to inquire; but rather consider what this charge amounts to, and whether, under proper management, it would not have been greatly lessened, or ceased to exist altogether.

23. I find by the review of the registry laws, undertaken and published by a Committee of the African Institution in 1820, that in a period before the abolition, the Assembly of Jamaica estimated the loss in population at 7000 annually, or nearly $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.; in a period since the abolition not quite half per cent. And we will suppose another very probable case, in which they might increase at the rate of $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent, and taking the interest at 6 per cent, the account will stand thus :

24. In the first case £35,000,000 at $8\frac{1}{2}$ per cent, would be £2,970,000, or very nearly 20 per cent on the sugar consumed in this country, on which it mostly falls.

25. In the second, which is about the present state of the case, under an improved treatment of the slaves, since the abolition, $6\frac{1}{2}$ per cent will be £2,270,000; and it is remarkable how very near this sum is to 15s per cwt. the difference of duty, as a protection which was proposed between East and West India sugars.

26. In the third supposed case, of an increase of the number of negroes, $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent will have to be deducted from the 6 per cent, not only on account of their increased number, but also from the increased quantity of sugar they would make; then the account would stand at $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent, or £1,225,000, or about 8s per cwt. This might be carried still further, to show the effects of a still greater increase; but I trust it is pretty clear that the faster the slaves increase; the cheaper can the sugars be afforded, from an increased quantity of them.

27. There is perhaps no principle in the nature of man more generally admitted, than his tendency to increase under favourable circumstances and good treatment; and hence it follows, where men are free, that according to the demand for labour will be the increase of labourers. In this country, where there is *very often* great distress

from the want of employment, still it is very probable the numbers will have increased in 20 years at least 30 per cent. In America, where there is *seldom* a want of employment, the population will probably have doubled in 20 years.— And in the West Indies, where I presume there is *never* a want of employment, it will rest with the planters to show *why they have not doubled*.

28. The number of slaves in Jamaica in the year 1800, was 300,939 ; in 1815, 313,814 ; and in 1817, it appears to have been 345,252. This is an extraordinary, not to say suspicious, increase in two years. Now, during the last 20 years, there must have been large importations, and yet the whole increase is trifling to what it ought to have been, even without any importations at all ; for it is not very probable that for a long period there can have been any great disparity between the numbers of the sexes ; in 1817 there appear to be 74 females more than males.

29. It is to be hoped that no portion of the increase between 1815 and 1817 has arisen from illicit importation ; but even the registry laws, since their adoption, seem to afford doubtful security ; for the African Committee, in their review of some of them, state that, “ Instead of giving new security to freedom, they expose it to new and unprecedented dangers,—instead of preventing, they tend to facilitate and protect, a contraband slave-trade.”

30. If the quantity of sugars had greatly increased, they would doubtless have fallen in price; such must also have been the case with slaves; indeed, had they increased as fast as the population of America in the last 20 years, they would probably have been of very little value as a saleable commodity, which is the natural state of man; and I do not at present know of any thing, but *some sort of abuse* preventing his natural increase, which can make him long retain any price; and until this supposed cause of their not increasing is completely and entirely removed, by satisfactory proof, the West India planter can have no ground for introducing this item into the estimated cost of his sugars, for it can never be admitted *that any man shall claim a benefit from his own neglect or misconduct.*

31. If this item of expense can fairly be removed from the cost of West India cultivation, there would be very little ground to seek for any great difference in duty; but though I do most strongly object to any tax on the country, which must tend to perpetuate or to increase human misery, yet I feel as strong a desire that the money of the country may be liberally used when it can be made to remove or alleviate its sufferings. If the general difference of duty between East and West India sugars stood at 3s per cwt. I would allow a bounty of 2s to 3s per cwt. on the produce of any island which should make its

registry laws effectual—should impose restrictions on the working of the slaves—(as in this country has been done on cotton-mills, though the labourers there are free)—should make such other regulations as humanity dictates, for the amelioration of the condition of this oppressed race.

32. Should such plans and regulations as these be adopted, the decreased employment of the slaves might, for a short interval, decrease the quantity of sugar produced, and hence lessen the employment of shipping; but this would only be temporary, and then but a transfer; for it would require a much greater number of ships to bring the same quantity of produce from the East; and lessening the work of the slaves, who have *probably too much*, would increase the work of ship-carpenters, sailors, &c. who have *certainly too little*. There can be little doubt, that any thing which would materially reduce the price of sugar, would increase its consumption; and this increase, being at first brought from the East Indies, would be a very great means of relieving the shipping interest, in which there cannot be much less than thirty millions sterling at present employed to very little profit. In this great naval country, an increased employment of shipping has been thought worthy of consideration, even where it *added* to the price of goods, and surely it will not be thought less worthy of it, where an increased employment of ships will produce goods at a *lower* price.

33. These measures, I am persuaded, would soon produce such an increased quantity of sugar in the East, as would save the consumers in England one million and a half annually ; whilst, by a greatly augmented consumption, the revenue would be increased, the shipping interest flourish again, and above all, it would produce such an effect on the prices of sugar, throughout Europe, as would make slaves no-where worth importing, and thus put an end for ever to the devastations of the slave-trade on the African coast, and open the way to the civilization of that devoted and oppressed, but interesting portion of the globe.

34. I could enlarge much further on the advantages so obviously arising on every side from measures of sound policy, grounded on principles of humanity ; but if I shall have convinced thee of the correctness of my opinions, I am sure I shall have said enough to engage those powers of eloquence, which have been so successfully exerted in the cause of this oppressed people.

I am, with great respect,

Thy friend,

J. C.

Liverpool, 9th Month 3, 1821.

WILLIAM WILBERFORCE,

Respected Friend,

35. Though the first proposition of an increased duty on Muscovado sugars from the East Indies, has been given up, and that measure confined to clayed sugars only; it should be remembered, that the difference of duty, at one time 3s, and afterwards, on the opening of the trade, 10s per cwt. was fixed at those rates, with a knowledge of what those sugars were. Yet I rejoice at the compromise which has been made, in having the bill passed for one year only, and that on the express understanding that the subject should be thoroughly investigated next year, and a final settlement made; and I agree with thee in believing, that when the public shall be duly informed on the subject, a settlement will be made, "such as sound policy prescribes, combined with a fair consideration of the claims of the West Indians." Such a settlement is all that ought to be desired by any party. In order to the investigation of this subject, I shall communicate some further information, and then endeavour to reply to some objections which have been made to my views upon it.

36. Whilst our own Colonies produce about one-third more sugar than we consume, and the

remainder has to find a market by exportation elsewhere, it might reasonably be supposed, that on the market price for this surplus, which would be regulated by the value of all sugars in the markets of Europe, would that of British plantation sugars chiefly depend. Hence it should follow, that in the English markets, British plantation and foreign sugars, of equal qualities, ought to bring the same prices, (for when sold for export, both are alike free of duty;) but such is not the case. British plantation sugars always maintain a higher value by many shillings per cwt. and the consequence is, that the quantity of that description exported is extremely insignificant.—The whole, or nearly so, of what is exported, consists of refined sugars; and we are naturally led to inquire how this happens, seeing, as we do, that the foreigner cannot afford to refine from our raw material, at the prices given by our own manufacturer. If it arose from the superiority either of skill or machinery in this country, the effect would be looked for, either in the better quality of the produce, or in such as would peculiarly suit the consumption of the country for which it was destined; but neither of these are found to be the fact; for, of the whole exported, probably nine parts in ten are of the lowest quality that will bear the denomination of refined; and instead of being fitted for the use of the Continent, have to be again refined there. It cannot then be

accounted for on these grounds; and the only cause which I can discover, is that of a bounty on the exportation of refined sugars, amounting, from the best information which I can collect, to at least 6s per cwt. as in the following statement :

112lb of raw sugar will produce of refined, of such quality as is commonly exported,

61lb of refined, drawback 46s per cwt. is £1 5 0 $\frac{1}{2}$

22lb of bastard, do. 30s do. 0 5 10 $\frac{3}{4}$

24lb of molasses, sold for home-use, but if im- }
ported, liable to a duty of 10s per cwt. } 0 2 1 $\frac{1}{2}$

5lb waste

112lb £1 13 0 $\frac{3}{4}$

Duty paid on 112lb raw sugar 1 7 0

Bounty, being so much more than paid, 0 6 0 $\frac{3}{4}$

But this bounty will vary according to the different qualities of the sugar; in some cases it is stated to produce 66lb per cwt. which would give a bounty of more than 7s per cwt. and when the superior skill of the British manufacturer, which has spread his products over the civilized world, is directed, as it must be in this case, to the obtaining of a bounty on the largest quantity of molasses or other impurities, by leaving them in the sugar, we scarcely know how to estimate his success. The effect of this bounty is to enable the refiner for exportation to give so much the more for his sugars, than if he did not receive it; and as the price of these regulates the prices of

the home-market, the people of England have to pay this bounty, to make the sugars exported so much cheaper to the people of the Continent; whilst it must make those they consume at home just so much dearer to themselves : and here we have the explanation of the higher price of British sugars in the English market.

37. The amount of this bounty, estimated as above, at 6s per cwt. would be on 200,000 tons used at home and exported £1,200,000, or 8s per cwt. if charged on that used at home; 7s per cwt. would, in like manner, make 9s 4d. Now as we know we actually pay 10s per cwt. extra duty on some quantity of East India sugar, the protection must certainly amount to that sum, so far as those qualities extend, and it is fair to include this advantage, in the estimate of bounty or protection, which in one shape or other is received. But without dwelling on this advantage, I may state the present average price of sugar at 32s 9d; and if from that is deducted 10s per cwt. for freight and charges, it leaves only a nett proceed of 22s 9d; and if what is paid in bounty is charged on what is consumed at home, it will make 8s, or it may be 9s 4d, but say 8s per cwt. an advance of more than 50 per cent. on what those proceeds would make without it;—a bounty, support, or protection for which, I presume, there is no parallel in any other branch of our agriculture or commerce.

38. None can have higher claims to support and protection than the owners and cultivators of our own soil: the growers of corn have, indeed, the monopoly of the home-market, when the prices are below certain rates; but, as appears by the late agricultural report, foreign corn has come into competition with that of English growth, either free of duty or at very small rates, (except at very short intervals,) for the last forty years;—it is now excluded; but this avails them little, so long as they have produced more than enough, and have no bounty to get quit of their surplus by exportation; whilst to the sugar-planters it appears probable £300,000 per annum may be paid on what is exported, without calculating its effect on the prices at home. Now, if that sum is paid on 200,000 tons of sugar, netting to the planter 22s 9d, or £4,550,000; then nine millions of quarters of wheat at 56s 7d, being £24,462,500, would be entitled to receive £1,630,833 annually, as a bounty on the export of its surplus. If there were now such a bounty, should we be supplying the West Indies, the Brazils, and the Mediterranean with Foreign wheat or flour? No: a very much smaller bounty would have caused an extensive export, and have thereby produced such an advance on the prices at home, as would have removed the complaints of agricultural distress. The ship-owners, who have, to some extent, the

monopoly of our freighting-trade, have no equivalent for this export bounty.

39. I am not advocating such a system, but merely showing the very superior advantages enjoyed by the West Indian planters over the other branches of the community; and I contend, that whatever bounty or protection they may be entitled to receive, should be given in a way to produce a national benefit. Let it be such as will improve the treatment, and encourage the increase of their slaves, diminish their price, and lead to ultimate emancipation. When there may no longer be any necessity for those expensive systems of agents, overlookers, task-masters, or other attendants of forced labour, then, it is to be hoped, the West Indies may grow sugar as cheap as any other part of the world, and the necessity of such protection cease.

40. If such unnatural support is yet insufficient, there must be something wrong at the bottom; something approaching towards its final termination; and who does not rejoice to see that this is the case, as regards the system of slavery? It has something in it so degrading in its effects on the nature, dispositions, and whole character of man, that we cannot bring free and slave labour into comparison; for, though on a simple calculation, it may appear that slave labour is cheaper, yet Adam Smith says, "The experience of all ages and nations, I believe, demonstrates that the

work done by slaves, though it appears to cost only their maintenance, is, in the end, the dearest of any." And he goes on to show, that only articles which afford very high profits will pay for slave cultivation.

41. This, I am informed, is strikingly illustrated in some districts bordering on Pennsylvania, and the two opposite banks of the Ohio, dividing a slave state from one where slavery is not allowed; where the same soil and climate give the same kind of products, one by free men, the other by slaves; there, comfort, order, and neatness, the attendants of prosperity, as distinctly mark the cultivation by free men, as do poverty and waste the cultivation by slaves.

42. That there are people in the province of Bengal in a miserable state of degradation, I have no doubt; but, that they are bought and sold, I do not believe. It is stated in Hamilton's Gazetteer, "Slavery, in its severest sense, is not known in Bengal. Throughout some districts, the labours of husbandry are executed chiefly by bond servants; in certain other districts the ploughmen are mostly slaves of the peasants for whom they labour, but are treated by their masters more like hereditary servants, or mancipated hinds, than like purchased slaves. Though the fact must be admitted, that slaves may be found in Bengal amongst the labourers in husbandry, *yet in most parts none but freemen* are occupied in the business

of agriculture." But to so small an extent, and of such a nature, is slavery in Bengal, that many who have resided years in that country, are not aware of its existence. That slavery, in an aggravated shape, does exist in Malabar, is plain from a survey by Francis Buchanan; but it only extends to a very small proportion of the population. In one considerable district, containing a population of 396,672, there are only 7924 slaves; but this is an entirely distinct country, and distant in a direct line at least 1000 miles from Bengal; and it is somewhat remarkable, that, instead of exporting sugar, this district imports largely of that article from Bengal. (Milburn, vol. i. 334.) But whether this is to be considered another proof, if there needed one, of the greater expense of slave cultivation; or whether the country is less fit for the growth of sugar, I have not the means of deciding.

43. Observations have been made on the miserable wages of the people of Bengal, who are stated to receive only 3d per day, (though in many cases I presume they are considerably less;) but considering the extreme cheapness of food and clothing there, I consider this equal fully to 6d per day in the West Indies, where it is said that the slaves are comfortably clothed and fed. Now I find (Edwards, vol. ii. 351, 352,) the support of a slave, where both food and clothing are bought, is £7 5s currency per year, or in sterling very

nearly 3½d per day : if this be comfort, 3d per day in Bengal must be luxury. But where the labour of a man can be had, *when wanted*, for little (if any thing) more than will maintain him, it is difficult to understand any object in holding him as a slave ; if slavery does exist at all with such a low rate of wages, it cannot be to any great extent.

44. But upon the comparative state of comfort, or as respects trading with one or the other in consequence, what I have before written, and even the nature of the subject itself, seems to have been entirely misunderstood. Benevolent feelings, however they are evinced, are entitled to our respect, though in order to any practical good, they must be directed by sound judgment. It is not the comparative comfort or the condition of the people we deal with, that we are so much to look to, as whether our trading tends to improve or to impair that condition.

45. We might approve the good intention, though we should lament the mistaken judgment of the man, who, on account of the degraded state of the people on the coast of Africa, who are in the habit of buying and selling each other, should refuse to deal with them for wood, teeth, and palm oil, though his doing so might tend to alter those habits which he condemned. Our feeling would be the same towards one who should leave off the use of cotton goods on

account of the miserable wages of the weavers, whose condition could only be improved by a more extended sale of their productions. And, though I abhor slavery in every form, yet far be it from me to censure all those who may hold men in slavery ; for though I might respect the feelings of a man who should at once emancipate his slaves, yet how much more deserving of esteem would he be, whose feelings were governed by judgment, and held them in slavery until he had so prepared them, as to make emancipation a benefit.

46. What I have said in a former letter, about the low prices causing an increase of slaves, was the statement of a cotton planter ; but there will, no doubt, be particular exceptions to this rule. I admit that, when the price falls, the planter will endeavour to remunerate himself by an increased quantity. But how is this to be done ? Before the abolition of the slave-trade, the Assembly of Jamaica stated a loss on the slaves of about $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. Had this gone on from that time to the present, the produce of sugar must, of necessity, have been *much less* ; but I believe their treatment is improved, and the consequence is, the loss is reduced to one-half per cent. Now, if the negroes are worked as much as they can be, without lessening their numbers, then the only possible way to increase the sugars, is, to increase the number of negroes, and the only

possible way for that, if they cannot be imported, is to improve their treatment. But I fear it will, in too many cases, prove, that instead of partaking of the benefits with their masters, of brisk trade and high prices, (as free men would do, who could do as much and no more than they chose,) slaves would often fare like post-horses on such occasions, and be over-worked; but on this subject we may go from theory to fact. Were the slaves in the West Indies treated better, or did they increase faster when their masters had a better trade? The sad catalogue of importations of slaves which I shall have to give, must, for ever, set this point at rest.

47. Whilst I am contending for an increased population in the West Indies, and a consequent increased growth of sugar, it would be a strange paradox to be contemplating a diminution of their trade, or a transfer of it from the West to the East.

48. England established one colony of white people in North America, and another of blacks in the West India Islands. The import of slaves into Jamaica (Edwards, vol. ii. 64) from 1700 to 1786, was 610,000, of which he estimates about one-fifth to be re-exported, leaving on the island 488,000; and by the review of the registry laws 188,785 appear to have been added by importation from 1787 to 1808, making together 676,715, and yet in 1817, the whole of the slave population was

only 345,252, or about one-half the import since 1700; and if we take this as representing one-half of all the islands, and estimate the cost at about £50 each, we shall find that the present population has cost nearly £100 each, or about £70,000,000 sterling. The whole value of their exports from 1698 to 1798 being about £200,000,000.

The white population of America was,

in 1740, 1,046,000

1790, 3,929,326

1800, 5,309,758

1810, 7,239,903

And probably may be in 1820, 9,000,000

The exact extent of emigration to America cannot be ascertained, but can only form a very small proportion of the present population; and if that population had cost at the same rate as that of the West India Islands, it would have probably been £900,000,000, whilst the whole exports, the produce of their labour, will not, I believe, from the year 1700 to the present time, much exceed £300,000,000. Hence it appears, they must have found a natural and far cheaper way of augmenting the population; for it is plain, that the white population of America could not have been imported at the same rate of expense that the slaves in the West Indies have been. This proves, beyond doubt, "that nothing but high prices can support the slave-trade;" and,

in all that has been said on the other side, there has not been one reason given for the non-increase of slaves. I must, therefore, conclude it proved, that had the prices of the produce of the West Indies been as low as those of America have evidently been, the slaves could not have been imported, and that they would have increased as the white people of America have done, and as the slaves there are now doing, especially where the value of their labour is the least.

49. And let it be examined why the West India Islands remain a sole exception to the rule of a demand for labour increasing the number of labourers. Are they unhealthy? B. Edwards (vol. i. 262) states of Kingston, "This town is found to be as healthy as any in Europe," and shows the greater proportionate mortality in Manchester and Salford; and many of the islands were found with a much greater population than they now contain; and how else but by natural increase had they come there? Is there any thing about Africans different in this respect from the rest of the creation? No, they increase in America, as appears by the concurrent testimony of every one acquainted with the subject, and the increased exports of cotton, &c. confirm it. And if they did not increase in Africa, how has the vast drain from that coast been supplied? And where can be a more favourable situation for the growth of

population, than in the West Indies, “where the labour of sixteen hours per month will produce a sufficiency of food?” (Edwards, vol. ii. 162.)

50. It hence appears, that all the dreadful evils of the slave-trade for the last 120 years, have not only been wholly unnecessary, but that all the enormous expense of it might have been saved; and, consequently, the price of products afforded much cheaper, and the population of the islands have been more than double what it now is.

51. But it may be said, if the slaves and the products of the islands are to be so increased, where is the market to be found? This will be best answered by a reference to the rapidly increasing consumption of sugar, which in Great Britain in 1699 was about 10,000 tons,

1747	„	37,000	„
1797	„	67,000	„
1820	„	150,000	„

from whence it appears, that this has been going on with greater rapidity for the last 23 years; so that there seems little doubt, that if aided by some reduction in the price, it may be 300,000 tons in 20 years more. In such a case, it needs no calculation to show, that notwithstanding some reduction in the price to the planter, there is abundant room for increased income. Such an enormous addition to the duty would well admit of some reduction in its rates, and still leave the Government gainers by millions per

annum, and the people would be immense gainers by both those reductions.

52. It must be evident that a very great reduction in the price of slaves, would be the consequence of such an increase in their numbers ; but if the whole value of the products was augmented, this loss would be more than made up by the increased value of the land, which naturally follows an increased population. It may now be seen with what foundation my proposition is charged, with the ruin of West India property. On the contrary, I believe it to be its only preservation. And let it be remembered, that if the West India planters do not like this investigation, they have only themselves to blame for it.

53. With respect to the probable extension of the sugar-trade with Bengal, it is said, in a work on the husbandry of that province, “ The growth for home-consumption and for the inland trade, is vast, and it only needs encouragement to equal the demand of Europe also ;” and in the same work, it is said to cost little more than 5s per cwt. In the year 1798, the average cost of the Company’s importation on board, was 19s per cwt. though at present it is much higher ; but from the recent great alteration in the exchange, sugar, bought at the same price in rupees, would probably not cost more than 16s 6d per cwt. on board ; but if the subject receive that attention which its importance deserves, there can be no doubt of our

obtaining from the East an immense quantity of sugar, on very moderate terms; and the present rate of the exchange will show, that the difficulty in that trade is not in finding articles for exportation, but in finding those things which will make profitable returns; and there seems every prospect that the market in the East for British manufactures, will only be limited by the extent of the market for the returns; but even if silver had to be sent, it would be no great inconvenience, in the present state of our shipping, if a ship had to take out goods to the West, to procure the silver she is afterwards to carry to the East.

54. Whilst a feeling of benevolence, and a desire to promote the happiness, and lessen the sufferings of the human race, wherever situated, and however circumstanced, have been, and are rapidly increasing amongst us at home; and whilst our commerce must carry these with it to the four quarters of the globe, with what different feelings than formerly must its extension be now contemplated! And if an increase of our intercourse with the East is the most likely means to improve the condition, to inform the minds, and thereby tend to remove the idolatry and superstition of the people; if this intercourse will give us a healthful article, contributing greatly to our comfort, at a reduced price, and save the people an immense sum an-

nually ;—if this reduction in the price should force on the attention of the West Indians, whether in the British or foreign colonies, the serious inquiry, why a demand for labour does not there, as every-where else, increase the number of labourers ; and why, with a sufficient attention to these things, sugars may not be produced in the West as cheap as in the East ; and thus, by taking a just view of the real causes of their situation, avert that state which slavery exhibits when coming into competition with free labour : if a sufficient attention to these subjects shall soon reduce the price of slaves, so as not to make them worth importing, then there is an end, on immovable grounds, to the slave-trade on the African Coast ;—then, and not till then, that immense continent will be open to our efforts of civilization. If these views have any thing of reality in them, I trust we shall not cease to hear of the *humanity* and sound policy of increasing greatly our supplies of sugar from the East.

55. Some objections which have been made, not bearing on the main import of my letter and the subject, seem not to require any particular reply ; but I may just say, I do believe the time will come, when this country will no more tolerate the degrading, impolitic, and expensive system of slave cultivation, in any part of its dominions, than it now does the slave-trade. But that time is not yet come ; and I expressly said, I should

not now go into that subject ; but I did, I think, show another ground (which has been left unnoticed and unreplyed to) upon which we might now refuse to take into the *estimated* cost of production, the cost of the slave. I have, in some of these objections, for the first time, seen a claim on the country, for a reasonable return for capital invested. With a reasonable protection, I fully accord ; but to secure, in all cases, a reasonable return, would be to give those rewards indiscriminately, which belong only to judgment, industry, and economy. Again, it is stated that a high rate of interest indicates a miserable state of labourers. The rate, and especially the market rate of interest, at some times, and the rate of wages in America, are facts wholly at variance with this theory.

56. To do justice to the whole of this subject, would far exceed the bounds of a letter ; but before I conclude, I shall just bring into view some points which yet require investigation.

57. The East India sugars interfere chiefly with the fine sugars. Do these require any further assistance ? and will this measure afford any relief to the lower qualities ? Is it not unnecessary as to the one, and unavailing as to the other ? Would not an *ad valorem* duty more effectually serve those planters who stand in need of assistance ?

58. Do all the sugar Colonies require support, or only some estates in some of them ?

59. The comparison of free and slave labour, well deserves general consideration. That work which would be easy to one who could choose when and how to do it, might often be highly oppressive to the slave.

60. Why do the Foreign sugar planters sell their sugars so much cheaper than the British? The British planter may, if he will, raise slaves cheaper than they can be imported.

61. How does a high price for slaves accord with an unprofitable trade? Can the price of slaves be high in the West India islands, and the business, at the same time, be unprofitable? Does not this indicate great difference of management? for, at the price they bear, somebody can make a profit, or the price would fall.

62. By keeping up the price of sugar, and with it the present system of management, under which the slaves do not appear to increase, we shall, if our consumption go on increasing, diminish, and finally destroy the business of refining for exportation; whilst, by a change of system, we might not only preserve, but greatly extend it, by allowing all sugars to be refined for exportation, without either duty or drawback, and British to pay no duty but on the refined goods for home-use.

63. When, by the aid of machinery, we have the same comforts with less labour, we must either increase our comforts, or a part of the people will

be out of employ. And is there any thing more calculated to afford that, than an increased consumption of sugar? this being the means of increasing employment, and thereby promoting the distribution of the necessaries of life, which we have often had in the greatest abundance when there has been the greatest distress.

64. If all these important subjects shall be taken up as they deserve, and the attention of the public called to them by abler hands, I shall rejoice in having in any degree contributed to it.

I am, with great respect,

Thy friend,

J. C.

POSTSCRIPT.

65. I cannot but respect the sentiments in the conclusion of Thomas Fletcher's third letter, which I consider the genuine effusions of a good heart, and most cordially do I agree in attributing much of the change in Europe, from slavery to freedom, to the influence of Christianity; but where men refuse to be governed by it, God has appointed another means in the nature of things, and has said, "Hitherto shalt thou come, and here shall thy proud waves be stayed;"—and if I have dwelt more on this second means, and endeavoured to

show what must be the fate of slavery, when
 40, 41. coming into contact with free labour, it was be-
 cause it arose out of the nature of the subject, to
 show, that if men will not see that it is their
 interest to do right, they will at length be com-
 pelled to feel it. A proof that men are not
 always governed in their conduct by a due regard
 to their own interest, is to be found in the inatten-
 tion of the planters to the breeding of slaves ;
 67. though their cost in this way could never bear a
 comparison with the cost of purchase, yet when
 profits were extravagant, they no doubt made
 money by buying slaves at high prices. But no
 reason can be given, I presume, why both modes
 of increase might not have been going on at the
 same time, except that these high prices, which
 are inseparably connected with slavery, enabled
 the planters to neglect their own concerns.

66. With reference to this subject, the late
 census of the population of America furnishes us
 with most important information, and such as
 could never before have been obtained. We have
 now the account of the increase of that population
 for a period of 10 years after the abolition of the
 slave-trade.

The slave population in 1820, was..... 1,531,431
 in 1810, it was... 1,191,364

Showing an increase of about 29 per cent, 340,067

And it seems most probable that the increase is

now going on at a greater rate than the average of that period, as being farther removed from the time of the abolition. And notwithstanding America suffers to exist, around the seat of its government, many of the horrors and the worst features of the trade it has abolished on the African coast, by which means vast numbers of slaves, bred in Virginia, are constantly sold to the planters of the Southern States, yet even in that state there is a considerable increase.

[illegible]

Being an increase of about 8 per cent ... 32,635

67. If this vast increase in the number of slaves had in any way hindered their work, we might have looked for some falling-off in the proportion of their exports; on the contrary, we find that the exports of cotton of 1808, 1809, and 1810, make an average of 52 millions of pounds, whilst the two last years will probably average 120 millions of pounds, which is far more than in proportion to the then and present number of slaves; so that their increasing has at least not hindered the cultivation of cotton; and as to the expense of breeding or bringing up children, whether of slaves or of freemen, that must vary according to the varying circumstances of the case. To bring up a child to 5 or 6 years old, must every-where cost something, but in many situations, as in our

cotton spinning and weaving districts, the labour of such is of some value, and at 8 or 10 they do more than support themselves. The children of slaves in America are employed on the cotton plantations whilst they are termed only half and quarter hands; and there can be no doubt, long before they are grown up they will have repaid the expense of helpless childhood, and of course are then a clear gain to their masters. It has long been said with respect to America, that a family is a fortune, and as they marry early, this fortune must be acquired whilst the family is young.

68. Looking at the increase of the white population of America, I stated, that all the evils of the slave-trade, for the last 120 years, and all the cost of the slaves, might have been saved, and the islands have had twice the population they now have; but we are now enabled to calculate this, from the actual increase of the *slave* population of America. The slaves in Jamaica, in 1673, were 9504; in 1734, 86,546. I have no account of their number in 1700, but if we take them at 50,000 less than in 1734, or begin the calculation at 1734, we shall find, in either case, that, at the rate of their increase in America, the number in Jamaica, instead of 345,252, would have been 770,000, without the importation of a single slave during the period;—a population which would appear more than adequate to the complete cultivation of the island; and if so, the slave-trade,

with respect to that island, would long ago have ceased of itself, if not kept up by very high prices, enabling the planters to neglect their own interest; and I presume, that no one, who has 3 to 6. attentively considered the subject, can doubt, that 9. slave cultivation will as certainly cease at no 20 to 22. distant period, unless the people of England are 40, 41. enormously taxed to support it.

69. Thomas Fletcher, whose letters have been published by the direction of the West India Association, thinks the increase of Barbadoes—one-third per cent per annum—"quite as large as is desirable," (the increase in Demerara is not more than one per thousand.) To West India planters, who claim the monopoly of the British market, and who see that, if the consumption goes on increasing as it has done, whilst the produce of 51. British Plantation sugar remains nearly stationary, the whole will, in a few years, be consumed in Great Britain; that they will then be independent of other markets, and if they can lay a duty high enough for their purpose on the importation of East India sugars, they may charge the people what price they please for their own, this increase may, indeed, appear quite large enough.

70. From the preceding statements it will appear probable, that with proper attention on the 66, 67. part of the planters, 180,000 to 200,000 might have been added to the number of slaves in our West India islands in the last ten years: let the

effect of this on their affairs be examined. If we take the value of a slave at £75, then they have neglected the opportunity of adding to their property £13,500,000 to £15,000,000, which, at 6 per cent, would have been £810,000 or £900,000 per annum, which would be about equal to 4s 6d per cwt. on 200,000 tons of sugar. This is supposing that there was land enough for cultivation with coffee, (which T. F. says pays very well,) or any other article which would have kept up their value; but supposing land to be becoming more scarce, whilst the slaves were growing more plentiful, then, though the price of the slave would fall, that of the land would rise; for as land, capital, and labour, are necessary to give *produce*, and its value is divided amongst the three, according to the different degrees of abundance or scarcity in which they may exist towards each other, it follows, that if labourers become more abundant, land and capital will have the larger share of the produce; and in either case the property of the planter will be equally improved.

71. If farmers, occupying lands in Ireland, but residing in this country, were to apply for some legislative relief, on account of the badness of their trade; and if their distress was clearly made out to arise from the want of that attention to the breeding and increase of their cattle, which those residing on the spot paid to it, every one will

anticipate the answer they would receive :—first attend to your own concerns ; for when you have done what you can for yourselves, it is then time enough to seek relief from others. This might be the simple answer where cattle were the subjects of neglect ; but when it is our fellow-creatures, it is impossible for any thing to call more loudly for legislative inquiry.

72. The difference between the circumstances of free men and of slaves is so great, that I 46. conceive I have already shown, that though an improved trade must necessarily improve the condition of the one, it may impair the condition of the other. Whilst the slave-trade existed, and whilst the planter could readily afford to buy slaves, it is admitted by T. F. they were not so well treated ; but now that the trade is abolished, they treat them better ; and it will not be contended that this acknowledged improvement is a consequence of the good profits enjoyed by the planters. As a further confirmation of these views, I will give an extract from the *Quarterly Review* respecting the Cape of Good Hope :—

“ For many years past, not a slave of any description has been imported into the colony, and twenty years hence there will probably not remain a slave within it. The extravagant prices they formerly bore are gradually diminishing, in consequence of the influx of European labourers, whose superior skill and capacity must supersede

that of the Malays." "In no part of the world are slaves treated so well, and worked so easily, as at Cape Town."

73. Having shown the burthens which have been laid upon the people in consequence of the
 48 to 50. slave-trade, and what they must still bear if slave cultivation is to be supported, I shall now endeavour to show, that enormous as this may be, it forms but a small part of the sacrifices which our manufacturers, and through them every other class of the country, are called upon to make. Neither does it end here, for the subject is of vital importance to every one whose interests are connected with the prosperity of our vast empire in the east.

37.

74. Every improvement in machinery must produce more goods with the same quantity of labour, and if there is not a greater consumption of those goods, some of the labourers must be out of employment. Cheapness will extend their consumption, and what are not wanted at home, will of course be exchanged for some foreign commodity. This may, in some cases, again be exported, and again exchanged for something else; and as these improvements extend, we must encourage the introduction of more of the produce of other countries, without which our labourers cannot be employed.

75. Since the opening of the East India trade, and the great fall in the price of cotton in conse-

quence of it, we have seen an unprecedented extension of our manufactures of this article. From this circumstance, and our constantly improving machinery, we are now, notwithstanding the fall of 20 per cent in the exchange from India, enabled to undersell even their heavy fabrics, in every market of the world, by fully 20 per cent, and to supersede their finer goods even for their own consumption;* and when it is considered, that the exports of piece-goods from British India to all parts of the world, amounted, in 1805, to 225 lacs of rupees, or nearly three millions sterling, and that though these exports are not yet all superseded, they can most of them be undersold; and that there seems no limit to the sale of our manufactures amongst 100,000,000 of people, but their means of paying for them, we need not be surprised, either at the extension of our trade,

* To make a piece of long cloth, 37 yards long and 40 inches wide, will take

14lb 8oz Bengal cotton, at $7\frac{1}{2}$ d ₹ lb.....	£0	9	$0\frac{3}{4}$
Spinning 13lb 4oz at $6\frac{1}{2}$ d, average twist & weft	0	7	$2\frac{1}{4}$
Steaming, warping, and winding	0	1	0
Weaving and dressing (power loom)	0	3	6
Bleaching and finishing	0	1	6
	<hr/>		
	£1	2	3

At the time this calculation was made, a piece
of long cloth would have cost in Calcutta,
about £1 10 0

Since the above estimate was obtained, there has been a fall in the price of cotton here, and in the rate of exchange in Calcutta.

or at the great difficulty and disadvantage under which all remittances from India are obtained.

76. Though we are said not to be the possessors of the land in India, yet those interested in its revenues and its general prosperity, will scarcely be told, that on this account their interests are less entitled to protection. It will not be charged on them as a crime, that they have left the possession of the soil in the hands of those with whom they found it; and have not, by destroying the natives, like the Spaniards in the West India Islands, made the soil their own.

77. In the East Indies we have a revenue of £20,000,000 sterling, which arises from land or other sources of taxation. This is wholly under the control of Great Britain, and no doubt a large portion of it centres in the hands of British subjects. This may readily be conceived, when it is estimated that the savings from civil and military employments, and from the gains of commerce remitted home to this country, amount annually to about £3,000,000 sterling, and for the interest of the debt we may add £1,000,000 more.* The loss on these remittances, at the present rate of exchange, is 20 per cent, or £800,000 per annum. But when we consider the immense loss of employment which the people of India have

* See H. St. George Tucker on the Plans of Finance of the East India Company.

sustained, or are sustaining, in the superseding of their exports of piece-goods, we cannot suppose that the state of things there has reached the worst. If no adequate substitute be found, such a loss will be seriously felt in the whole revenues of India, as it now is in the means of remitting home these savings.

78. There is not, amongst all the articles imported into England, or into Europe, one so likely to meet an extended consumption as sugar; for notwithstanding the supplies into Europe have greatly increased, yet a reduction in the price has caused them to be taken off, so that the stocks of sugar at the end of the year, have constantly been less in proportion to the consumption, than of almost any other article. Our own consumption, I have shown, has continued rapidly to increase, and that appears in a still greater ratio in last year; and if the people were in full employment, and had a sufficient demand for the products of their industry, I have little doubt of its reaching 500,000 tons per annum, as I estimate this would not be more than 56lbs for every individual, which I think they would use, if they had the means of paying for it. This would bring into more general use the fruits of our own soil, which in this northern climate need the help of a large proportion of sugar. 51.

79. That sugar, to any extent, may be obtained in India, I have entertained no doubt from all the 53.

accounts I have read ; but I am now enabled, by the information of a most respectable gentleman, who has resided 20 years in the district where the sugars are grown, and who was himself one of the first and most extensive exporters of this article to England, to place that matter beyond all doubt. He states it as his opinion, that if encouragement were given, by a reduction of duties in India and in this country, that in ten years, or perhaps less, India would produce more sugar than all Europe could consume. But it is not to sugars alone that the produce of that vast country is confined,—there is plenty of land and plenty of people, and he further says, that if the natives of the country were fully employed, they could produce almost every article that can be mentioned, and in almost unlimited quantity.

80. The labouring people of England have of late often been in distress; and what has been the cause? was there a deficiency of food or of clothing? no, there was plenty of both, but wanting employment, they had no means of obtaining a participation in that plenty. An extended intercourse, with this eastern branch of the British empire, is ready to give them all they need; and why is it to be denied to them, when the sugars of India are brought and offered in exchange for the employment they want? Are they to be told that these must go to the Continent, and be consumed there, forgetting that, unless they are given

away, those who consume them must pay for them, and that by the products of their own industry. And as, from a similarity of climate, an extended sale of European produce in this country is not so probable, such a system would induce them to extend their manufactures for their own use, and in that way to supersede ours, which would, in effect, be nearly the same as if they sent their goods to the East to pay for the sugars. The natural course of trade may be safely left to itself, and then, whether our imports are consumed at home, or exported and exchanged for something else, is of little importance; but if trade is an exchange of equivalents, we may be assured, that if we *will not* have one part, we *cannot* have the other.

81. Will these things not claim the most serious investigation of the British Legislature? Can it be possible, that with an immense population, often suffering from the want of employment, we will shut out and send to others the means of giving it to them when it is offered at our very doors? Why are they to be not only deprived of the employment it would give, but in connexion with this refusal, to be made to pay a higher price than is necessary for their sugars? Why is a system of slave cultivation thus bolstered up? and why is an improved system, which is so consonant to the interests of humanity, the only improvement which this country visits with prohibitory tax-

80.

8.

20.

21.

77. ation ? For what cause are the interests of those,
 whose property is in India, or whose dependance
 is on annuities there, to be sacrificed ? Shall the
 interests of an immense empire, with a revenue
 of £20,000,000 under our control, deserve no
 consideration ? In short, shall the interests of
 120,000,000 of British subjects, in England, in the
 East and the West Indies, be sacrificed to the
 57. mistaken views of a very few thousands, whose
 66. distress appears to be the natural consequence of
 71. their own neglect, and who would even themselves
 57. be very little benefited by the adopting of their
 own measures ? No, it is impossible ! The subject
 is now before the public, and whatever may be its
 present issue, I shall rest with unshaken confi-
 dence in the belief, that “Truth is great, and
 will at length prevail.”

APPENDIX.

82. I have been desirous not to turn the discussion of a question of vast importance into an individual dispute; as it is of little consequence what my opinions may be on this question, or whether I place more confidence in the report of the Committee of the African Institution, which Thomas Fletcher calls "that slanderous Committee," or on his statements. In speaking of the registry laws being made effectual, he says, "In the island of Jamaica, with which I am best acquainted, these things, *I am confident*, are done without any bounty, and *I dare say*, in the other islands also." The African Committee have given, at length, facts and reasonings on which their opinions of these laws are founded; if T. F. had done so, it would have been easier to judge between the two. He does not give any thing on which his *confidence* respecting Jamaica is founded, and it would only appear, that with respect to the other islands, he *dare say* what he does not know; but after reading the report of the African Institution, and the following, (from Edwards, vol. i. 137,) I must own I should consider a very low price of slaves a far greater security than such registry laws as appear to exist there. "Whether it be possible for any nation in Europe, singly considered, to prevent its subjects from procuring slaves from Africa, so long as Africa shall continue to sell, is a point on which I have many doubts; but *none* concerning the conveying the slaves so purchased into every island in the West Indies, in spite of the maritime force of all Europe. No man, who is acquainted with the extent of uninhabited coast of

the larger of those islands, the facility of landing in every part of them, the prevailing winds, and the numerous creeks and harbours in all the neighbouring dominions of foreign powers, (so conveniently situated for contraband traffic,) can hesitate a moment to pronounce, that an attempt to prevent the introduction of slaves into our West India colonies, would be like that of chaining the winds, or giving laws to the ocean."

83. Again, in the same sweeping way, T. F. says, "the same fallacy runs through the whole of Mr. Cropper's calculations;" by what preceded, he evidently means that they were over-charged, and in his next letter says, the interest of a working slave does not much exceed $4\frac{1}{2}$ d per day; if he had examined my calculation by his own statement, he would have found that he would make the amount much greater than I did. He values able hands at £100; as he is better acquainted with the present value of slaves than I am, in the calculations I have now made, I have estimated them at £75 each, as affording an allowance for inferior hands;

My estimate was £35,000,000, at 6 per cent for interest, and half per cent for their decrease	£2,270,000
Therefore, deducting the half per cent for decrease	170,000
	<hr/>
It will leave for interest	£2,100,000
Taking the number per Colquhoun at £634,000, and rating the interest at $4\frac{1}{2}$ d per day, it would make about	£4,330,000
I presume he could not mean this, but if a reduction of £25 is taken from the price of able hands, it would make an average of £75 as above, and taking the number at 634,000, the interest at 6 per cent would be about	£2,850,000

84. Thomas Fletcher quotes, from No. 44 and 45, "It is not the comparative comfort or the condition of the people we deal with, that we are so much to look to, as whether our

trading tends to improve or impair that condition ;" and seems to consider that this is inconsistent with what I said, No. 3, " On the opening of the East India trade, I believed that a great experiment was about to be tried, that of a free competition between the products of the East, by free men, and those of the West, by slaves." It will not be found that I have said any thing against trading with the West Indies, except when supported by heavy bounties ; but if he had gone a little further, he would have found a very rational motive for preferring the one to the other,—“ being persuaded, that cultivation by free men, in the country of their birth, must be *much cheaper* than by the transportation of slaves from Africa to the West Indies.”—Next to the consideration, that in our trading we transgress none of the laws of our Creator, is the buying at the cheapest market.

85. After having themselves attempted to break through a boundary fence made by act of Parliament, between the East and West India trade, it is singularly uncandid and incorrect to talk about the attempt to trespass on their manor, when we only say, if you are not satisfied with the present boundary, we are quite willing to discuss the propriety of a new one ; all we wish is, that both sides may be fairly heard.

86. I am confident, from the best information I can obtain, my statement of bounty on refined sugar is not overcharged ; and if such molasses as the refiners make, came from the West Indies, it would be chargeable with 10s per cwt. duty, and, therefore, after the refiner has received more than the whole duty back on the exportation of his sugars, it must be the same thing as a bounty to him to be allowed to sell them for home-use, without the duty they pay if imported. How else does it happen, that there is a difference, according to his statement, of 5s per cwt. between the price of British and Foreign sugars ; and how does he reconcile this bounty with promoting the interest of the refiners, if they pay 5s more for their sugars, and only get 3s of it back ? If we pay 5s per cwt. more than

the price of Foreign sugars for 200,000 tons, it will make £1,000,000; and if to this is added 5s per cwt. more, which is actually paid on fine sugar, it will fall little short of my estimate when taken in T. F.'s own way.

87. I will just go through one other calculation. I stated the cost of food and clothing of a negro as I found it in Edwards, to be 3½d sterling per day; this, from the same data, Thomas Fletcher converts into 16d. He adds 15s each for rent, to Edwards's statement of £5 for food, and £2 5s for clothing. He doubles this on account of only one-half being working hands, and then adds 50 per cent to rent and all, for alteration in the value of money since 1793, though he had just said the rent *cannot* be less than 15s, evidently referring to the present time. A very short reflection would have convinced him, that there is no ground for adding 50 per cent for an advance in the price of clothing, and that old people and children who cannot work, will neither eat nor wear as much as working people, and though I know nothing of the price of such food as the negroes use in the West Indies; yet we may judge whether £15 a year, for a working hand, is a natural price. Where this food is not bought, it can be raised by working 16 hours per month; and if it be said that children and old people can raise their own food, it will not be denied that *one* working hand could raise enough for *two*, in one day in the week, which would be worth £15; therefore, if the master employed him in this way the remaining five days, his labour would be worth £75 per year, whereas, if employed as he is, in raising sugar, it will perhaps not much exceed £25.

88. It should be remembered, that Thomas Fletcher is endeavouring to set me right, and, therefore, such carelessness is the less excusable, and I think the reader will by this time be satisfied that it is useless to go on further; for such sweeping, unproved assertions, such loose and careless estimates as those I have adverted to, would extend an argument to indefinite length, and are unfit for the investigation of truth.